

Message Text

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ACTION CU-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 NAS-01

NSF-01 OES-06 /031 W
----- 118756

R 040727Z SEP 76
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO USIA WASHDC
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 8362
AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

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USIA FOR ICS, IEU; STATE FOR EUR/SOV; CU/EE;
LENINGRAD FOR P&C

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: OEXC, UR
SUBJECT: BICENTENNIAL SEMINARS

REF: USIA 26293

1. EMBOFFS CALLED ON E.A. IVANYAN, EXECUTIVE SECRETARY,
AND A.A. KOKOSHIN, SCIENTIFIC SECRETARY OF USA INSTITUTE
SEPTEMBER 3 FOR DISCUSSION OF PROPOSAL TO HAVE USA
INSTITUTE CO-HOST BICENTENNIAL SEMINARS.

2. USA INSTITUTE REPS INDICATED THAT INSTITUTES
LEADERSHIP CAREFULLY CONSIDERED PROPOSAL AS SET FORTH
IN BENSON-IVANYAN LETTER OF JUNE 30, 1976, AND DISCUSSED
IDEA OF JOINT US-SOVIET SEMINAR WITH LEADING REPS OF
IMEMO, INSTITUTE OF GENERAL HISTORY, AND MOSCOW STATE
UNIVERSITY (MGU). CONSENSUS ON SOVIET SIDE WAS
THAT ADDITIONAL SEMINAR AS PROPOSED BY EMBASSY WAS
"UNJUSTIFIED" BECAUSE USA INSTITUTE, INSTITUTE OF GENERAL
HISTORY HAVE ALREADY CONDUCTED BICENTENNIAL RELATED
SEMINARS EARLIER IN YEAR AND WERE NOT PREPARED TO
PARTicipATE IN ADDITIONAL MAJOR ACTIVITY DEVOTED TO
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BICENTENNIAL. IVANYAN INDICATED MGU'S SEMINAR ON

BICENTENNIAL IS SCHEDULED FOR TWO DAYS IN EARLY IN OCTOBER.

3. EMBOFFS EXPRESSED GREAT DISAPPOINTMENT WITH SOVIET RESPONSE, WHICH WAS ORAL NOT WRITTEN. EMBOFFS SUGGESTED THAT PROPOSED JOINT SEMINARS WOULD IN FACT NOT REPEAT DISCUSSION ALREADY HELD IN CONTEXT OF ALREADY COMPLETED SEMINARS SINCE NO AMERICAN SCHOLARS HAD PARTICIPATED IN EARLIER EVENTS AND IN LIGHT OF FACT THAT TOP AMERICAN SCHOLARS HAD BEEN LINED UP FOR PROPOSED SEMINAR. EMBOFFS ALSO POINTED OUT THAT EMB WOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TO ASSIST IN RECRUITMENT OF AMERICAN SPEAKERS FOR ALREADY-COMPLETED SEMINARS IF SPONSORS HAD REQUESTED EMB SUPPORT.

4. IVANYAN LISTENED WITH INTEREST TO EMBOFF'S PITCH BUT INDICATED THAT INSTITUTE'S ANSWER WAS FINAL ONE. WHEN EMBOFFS SUGGESTED CONTACTING MGU THE POSSIBILITY OF HAVING AMERICANS PARTICIPATE IN EVENT PLANNED FOR OCTOBER, HE GAVE HIS BLESSING AND INDICATED THAT ACADEMY OF SCIENCE SHOULD ALSO BE INFORMED. REQUEST USIA ADVISE RE AVAILABILITY OF PROPOSED SPEAKERS IN EARLY OCTOBER. EMBASSY NOW ATTEMPTING TO ARRANGE MEETING AT MGU TO DISCUSS PROSPECTS, BUT RESPONSIBLE PERSONS AWAY UNTIL SEPTEMBER TEN. EMBASSY ALSO EXPLORING CONTACT WITH SPECIALISTS THROUGH USA-USSR FRIENDSHIP ASSOCIATION. REQUEST DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON COOPERATING WITH THIS ORGANIZATION.

5. USA INSTITUTE WOULD BE PREPARED TO ACCEPT ANY OF PROPOSED SPEAKERS AS INDIVIDUAL SPEAKERS TO USA INSTITUTE STAFF MEMBERS, AS IT HAS ACCEPTED VOLSPKRS, AMSPECS OVER PAST FEW MONTHS. IVANYAN ALSO PROPOSED THAT USA INSTITUTE, EMBASSY BEGIN NOW TO DEVELOP JOINT SEMINAR TO BE HELD DURING 1977 ON SOVIET-AMERICAN RELATIONS. EMBOFFS REPLIED THAT THEY WOULD REVIEW PROPOSAL. EMB FACORS EXPLORING PROSPOECTS WITH USA INSTITUTE. REQUESTS DEPARTMENT'S VIEWS ON THIS SEMINAR.

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6. ASSUME USIA WILL WISH TO ADVISE PROSPECTIVE SPEAKERS SOONEST THAT CHANCES FOR NOVEMBER SEMINAR MAY BE SLIM.

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH WE HAVE SOME DEGREE OF UNDERSTANDING USA INSTITUTE REPS ARGUMENT THAT POSSIBLE PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS AND SCHOLARS CANNOT TAKE ON BURDEN OF AN ADDITIONAL MAJOR SEMINAR ON BICENTENNIAL, WE INTERPRET TONE OF IVANYAN'S RESPONSE, AND ESPECIALLY

INDICATION OF USA INSTITUTE'S WILLINGNESS TO RECEIVE
TOP U.S. SCHOLARS AS INDIVIDUAL SPEAKERS, AS INDICATION
THAT IT COULD NOT FOR POLITICAL REASONS CO-SPONSOR
A MAJOR JOINT SEMINAR WITH LEADING U.S. SCHOLARS
WHICH WAS LIKELY TO ATTRACT SUBSTANTIAL MEDIA INTEREST.
FACT THAT USA INSTITUTE OF GENERAL HISTORY HAS ALREADY
HELD SEMINARS, AND PLANNED MGU SEMINAR PROVIDED
CONVENIENT REASON TO TURN DOWN EMBASSY'S PROPOSAL
WITHOUT REVEALING ACTUAL REASONS. WE ARE NOT YET
OPTIMISTIC ABOUT PROSPECTS FOR REACHING AGREEMENT WITH
MGU ON GETTING AMERICAN PARTICIPATNS INTO ITS CONFERENCE
BUT WILL TRY. IN OUR VIEW, IVANYAN SIMPLY SAW THIS
AS ANOTHER CONVENIENT OPPORTUNITY FOR PASSING BUCK ON
PROPOSAL. END COMMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 04 SEP 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MOSCOW14010
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760336-0669
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760990/aaaaccef.tel
Line Count: 130
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION CU
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: BICENTENNIAL SEMINARS
TAGS: OEXC, UR
To: USIA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006